Action Plan of Environment

587. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that experts on energy and environment have recommended to the Government for formulating the Himalayan action plan with a view to save the Himalayas from destruction and devastation; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Attention has been drawn to workshop entitled "Energy and environment issues in mountain development" organised recently by the Tata Energy Research Institute and HP Energy Development Agency (Himurja) at Shimla. The recommendations of this workshop inter alia included a National Action Plan of the Himalayan rehabilitation. The Government had already initiated a number of programmes for environmental conservation and sustainable development in the Himalayan region. These include the following:

—Govind Ballabh Pant Himalaya Paryavaran Evam Vikas Sansthan (Govind Ballabh Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development) has been established as an autonomous organisation of the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India to enhance the knowledge for evolving effective strategies for management of natural resources and sustainable development in the Indian Himalaya.

—An Integrated Action-oriented Research, Development and Extension Programme in the Himalayan region has been launched. This programme is for socio-economic development of Hill people in harmony with ecological balance.

—Two biosphere reserves, one in 'Nanadevi' and the other in 'Nokrek' have been set up.

—Two Eco-Task Forces, one each in Jammu & Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh, have been raised to undertake eco-restoration work.

Foreign Companies engaged in Oil Exploration

588. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the names of the foreign oil companies which are engaged in oil exploration activities in the country at present and the terms and conditions on which these companies have been engaged;

(b) what is the number of Oil wells drilled by those companies so far in the country; and

(c) what is the number of wells in which oil|gas reserves have been found?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) to (c) International Petroleum (Bermuda) Limited (IPL) is engaged in oil exploration activities. The main terms and conditions of the production sharing contracts are as under:—

1. Foreign oil company will explore for petroleum at its own risk and cost.

2. If there is a commercial discovery, ONGC|OIL will have the